

Suggestion No. 1989

A. Summary of the Suggestion:

The suggester proposes issuing a regulation requiring offices desiring changes in memoranda or letters which have been typed for the "final" time to utilize the staff of the changer rather than the staff of the originator.

B. Summary of Evaluation:

From the Chief, Records Management Staff:

"The suggester recommends issuing a regulation requiring that, when a reviewing or signing official desires a change in correspondence, it shall be the responsibility of his staff to rewrite or retype the paper rather than that of the originator's staff. There are differences of opinion on this point. Some individuals feel as the suggester does that such a requirement placed on reviewing and signing officials would discourage them from requesting changes which result in improvements too minute to justify the additional rewriting or retyping. However, others feel that often there is good cause to return a paper to the originator for reworking. They feel that whether the change is a major or minor one, this is the only way the originator can be schooled in completed staff work or learn the particular language or writing style his superiors consider acceptable.

"Regardless of opinions as to where lies the responsibility for making a change, two points seem quite clear: (a) A regulation is not the appropriate medium for attempting to correct this problem. There is no way to clearly define when a change should be made and, if so, by whom. (b) Regardless of who shoulders the burden for making a change, there will be no savings in manpower, merely a shifting of workload.

"We feel that a more sensible attitude toward changes could be encouraged by publicity. We have therefore submitted for publication in the October issue of the "Personnel Information Letter" an article entitled "Is Rewriting or Retyping Always Necessary?". This article encourages officials to judge the adequacy of correspondence on the basis of common sense rather than on trivialities or personal preferences.

"Unfortunately, the "Personnel Information Letter" is the only existing appropriate publicity medium having extensive headquarters-wide distribution. An Agency publication would be more appropriate. However, we feel that distribution of the "Personnel Information Letter" is extensive enough for initial

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publicity on this subject. Of the 525 copies distributed to key administrative personnel, about 200 are sent to headquarters elements outside the Office of Personnel.

"Since the suggester has pointed up a problem which we have taken steps to correct we recommend that she be granted a minimum award based on intangible benefits."

C. Recommendation of the Executive Secretary:

An award of \$10 based on intangible benefits.

OK
\$10

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